

REMARKS

Claims 11 - 21 and 41 - 48 are pending. Claims 1 - 10, 22 - 40, and 49 - 52 have been cancelled.

In the May 18, 2005 Office Communication, the Examiner required that the applicants select one of the following patentably distinct species of the claimed invention: Group 1 claims directed to a multi-channel echo canceller system method where the input multi-channel audio signals are reproduced by said loudspeakers without lowering the correlation of the signals; and Group 2 claims directed a multi-channel echo canceller system / method where in the input multi-channel audio signals are reproduced by said loudspeakers with lowering the correlation of the signals. The Examiner also required that the applicant is further required to select one of the following subspecies: A) Claims 11 - 21, depicted in Figs. 1, 9, 10, and 11; B) Claims 22 - 27, depicted in Figs. 12 - 15; C) Claims 28 - 31, depicted in Figs. 16 - 20; and D) Claims 32 - 35, depicted in Figs. 20 - 23.

The applicants elected, with traverse, the continued prosecution of the **Group 2A** claims, i.e., claims 11 - 21. In addition, the applicants would additionally like to elect the Group II claims, i.e., claims 41 - 48, i.e., the species including a multi-channel echo canceller system method where the input multi-channel audio signals are reproduced by said loudspeakers without lowering the correlation of the signals.

Applicant respectfully submits that claims 11 - 21, believed to be directed to the species of Figs. 9, 10, and 11, may be searched and examined along with claims 41 - 48, also directed to the species in Figs. 9, 10, and 11, without undue burden by the Examiner. More specifically, claims 11 - 21 and claims 41 - 48 are directed to a

common object of providing an echo canceller associated to a space provided therein with a plurality of loudspeakers and one or a plurality of microphones for forming audio transfer systems through which sounds are reproduced by said respective loudspeakers and are collected by said respective microphones, which is designed for performing an echo cancellation.

The Manual of Patent Examining Procedure (MPEP) § 803 states that, "If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without serious burden, the examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions." Based on the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that claims 11 - 21 should be searched and examined along with claims 41 - 48 to avoid unnecessary delay and expense to the applicant and duplicative examination by the Patent Office. Applicant respectfully requests that claims 11 - 21 and claims 41 - 48 be prosecuted together in the same application.

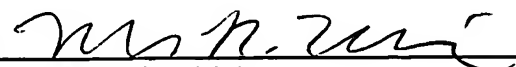
Claims 1 - 10, 22 - 40, and 49 - 52 are cancelled without prejudice.

An action on the merits is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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